

UUSS BOARD POLICY BOOK

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Color key:

Black = affirmed by the Board of Trustees

Blue = has been reviewed once, second review and affirmation pending

Red = Policies to be developed

DRAFT

UUSS BOARD POLICY BOOK

INTRODUCTION

Using the authority the Society has given it through the Bylaws, the Board of Trustees has adopted the following policies. Written policies of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady define the Board's own role and the roles of others, delegate authority, give guidance, and create accountability. Policies provide a framework for decisions to be made by individuals and by the various groups within the congregation away from the Board table. By policy, the Board fixes responsibility for making decisions, protects the congregation's human and material resources, and sets standards for the conduct of the congregation's work. As policies continue to be created and refined, this Policy Book will be updated and made readily available to the congregation.

Affirmed March 20, 2017

UUSS MISSION

Connecting in spiritual community, we
celebrate life with joy
grow in compassion
create justice

UUSS VISION

The vision of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady:

- We will boldly live our Unitarian Universalist Principles, within our church and in service to the larger community
- We will nurture mind and spirit through lifelong learning, engagement and growth
- We will create a community that welcomes, embraces and supports all
- We will worship in ways that comfort, inspire and challenge

1. BOARD GOVERNANCE

1.1. Philosophy of Governance

The congregation elects a Board of Trustees to serve as its governing body and calls a Minister(s) to serve as its spiritual, program, and administrative leader. Leaders at all levels of the congregation are expected to practice open decision-making, healthy conflict management, and mutual support in their respective roles.

The Board of Trustees is committed to activities and processes within the Society that:

- Clearly separate governance and management functions;
- Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and lines of authority;
- Empower staff and volunteers and hold them accountable;
- Allow for organizational agility, clarity and direction; and
- Allow the Board to focus its attention on discernment, strategy and oversight.

While fulfilling the specific roles and responsibilities spelled out for it in the congregational Bylaws, the Board intends to govern primarily by:

- Discerning and promoting the long-term mission, vision and well-being of the congregation;
- Setting goals and making strategic choices;
- Creating and sharing written policies to guide the congregation's ministry; and
- Monitoring and evaluating the congregation's leadership, including the Board itself.

Affirmed October 19, 2015

1.2 Policy Development and Adoption

In order to meet the commitments set forth in its Philosophy of Governance, the Board of Trustees will take steps to ensure that the policies in its Board Policy Book are clear, useful and reviewed on a regular basis.

Proposals for new policies or for amendments to existing policies will typically come from the Board itself or from the Governance Advisory Committee. Other church groups, members or staff who wish to propose a change in policy should contact the Governance Advisory Committee to describe their proposal and why it may be needed. The Governance Advisory Committee may research and edit the proposal and, if in agreement, forward it to the Board for consideration.

Proposals for new policies or for amendments to existing policies must be introduced at one meeting of the Board of Trustees for discussion only and voted upon at a subsequent meeting of the Board. This is designed to give time for reflection and evaluation, and for stakeholders to share any comments with the Board.

A new or amended policy must be approved by a majority vote of the Board.

Affirmed September 19, 2016

1.3 Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall hold regular meetings in accordance with the bylaws. These meetings shall be scheduled and publicized to the congregation in advance. Notice of any special meetings of the Board shall be posted at the church and on the church website. With the exception of executive sessions which involve discussion of personnel, legal and/or real estate matters, all meetings and the records thereof shall be open to Members of the Society.

At times when it is not possible or practical for all Board members to meet in person, a meeting of the Board may be conducted with participation by electronic conference media. Such a meeting will be governed by all of the rules that pertain to regular meetings of the Board, including the recording and approval of minutes. In instances of time urgency, the President may call for a vote of the Board by email with the consent of all Board members. Any action so taken must be ratified at the next Board meeting. If any Board member does not have email, the President will use an alternative means of contact to secure that member's vote.

Affirmed September 19, 2016

1.3.1 Agenda Setting

The agenda for the Board of Trustees meetings shall be established in a collaborative process led by the President, with participation of other members and the minister(s). The agenda shall be provided to Board members at least two days in advance of the meeting.

1.3.2 Use of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda contains actions the board will take without discussion, in order to deal efficiently with necessary information and routine actions to be taken by the Board. Usual Consent Agenda items will include minutes of the previous meeting (for formal approval) and reports from Board Advisory Committees, Ministry Teams and Staff (for acceptance). Any Board member may request that any item be moved from the Consent Agenda to the Discussion/Action agenda.

1.3.3 The Board Packet

The board packet, to be provided at least two days prior to the meeting, will contain the following:

- A reminder of the time and place of the meeting.
- A listing of consent agenda items
- A listing of discussion/action agenda items, preferably one to three in number.
- A page or two of background information about each discussion item.

1.3.4 Discussion/Action Items

The Board will have decisions to make and business to conduct in conjunction with its fiduciary responsibility, as well as open questions to consider for planning purposes. These items may include consideration of background information presented by a task force, committee or team; they may continue over more than a single meeting, and may include a decision for implementation.

1.3.5 Decision Implementation

When the Board votes on an item of business, the minutes will record individual or group responsibility for follow-up or implementation, and a time frame for implementation.

1.3.6 Oversight and Monitoring

The Board agenda will routinely include activities related to planning, oversight and monitoring of congregational activities, including scheduled reporting and review of Advisory Committee and Team activities.

Affirmed March 20, 2017

1.4 Board of Trustees Work and Work Products

The Board of Trustees will fulfill the specific roles and responsibilities spelled out for it in the congregational Bylaws.

As described in the policy on Philosophy of Governance, the Board will govern primarily by discerning mission; planning for the future; holding leaders of the congregation, including the Board's own members, accountable for their performance; and partnering with the Minister(s), staff and congregation.

The Board will also make use of its various Advisory Committees to assist it in its responsibilities, as described in the policy on Advisory Committees.

The Board's work and work products can be summarized as follows:

Providing leadership in a changing environment by:

- Creating and updating the congregational Mission and Vision.
- Reviewing, updating and creating policies to guide decisions and actions.
- Engaging in discernment about the future.

- Strategic planning, including environmental analysis, long-range projections, and annual goal-setting.

Assuring the financial sustainability of the congregation through:

- Strategic short- and long-term financial planning.
- Creating an annual budget for congregational approval and assuring effective programs of giving.
- Authorizing capital campaigns.

Providing oversight and monitoring by:

- Assuring compliance with state and federal law.
- Evaluating congregational performance on Mission.
- Evaluating the Board's own performance on key tasks.
- Evaluating the Minister's(s') performance in a model of partnership.

Ensuring engagement of the congregation by:

- Reporting to the congregation.
- Providing opportunities for open communication, discernment and partnership.

Affirmed October 29, 2016

1.5 Duties of Board Officers

In addition to any duties defined by the bylaws, the officers have the following responsibilities:

- The Board President prepares the Board's agenda, facilitates or arranges for facilitation of Board meetings, and works in partnership with the Minister(s) to ensure productive partnership between the Board and staff.
- The Vice President assists and substitutes for the Board President upon request.
- The Secretary ensures the safety and accuracy of Board records, including the minutes and Board policies. In cooperation with the staff, the Secretary sees that minutes and Board policies are promptly posted on the church website.
- The Treasurer supports fulfillment of the Board's financial oversight responsibilities by working with the staff to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to Board members on a timely basis. The Treasurer serves on the Finance Advisory Committee and is responsible for directing the annual financial audit or review.

Revision Affirmed February 21, 2017

1.6 Board Covenant

We the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady covenant to follow these practices:

- Listen respectfully.
- Encourage everyone to speak to balance participation.
- Agree to disagree.
- Don't make it personal.
- Remember we are a beloved community – practice radical hospitality.
- Use thoughtful sharing with the rest of the congregation.
- Represent the interests of the entire congregation.
- Keep in mind that the larger job and larger goals come first.
- Once a decision is made, speak with one voice.
- Practice timely and respectful communication in preparing for the meeting.
- Respect each other's time.

Communicate if you cannot attend the meeting or will be late.

Revised and approved September 18, 2017

1.7 Board Advisory Committees

The Board of Trustees establishes Advisory Committees to assist the Board to govern and generally not for administration, program management, or to make decisions on the Board's behalf. Advisory Committees facilitate the Board's development of policy revisions and procedures for monitoring and oversight of its own functions, as well as for those of paid and volunteer staff, and Ministry Teams of the Society.

The Board may also establish finite-termed Task Forces to accomplish specific objectives as defined by the Board.

Advisory Committees and Task Forces will communicate with the Board regularly, and will not speak or act for the Board except when given specific authority to do so.

Advisory Committees and Task Forces established by the Board may include one or more Trustees as voting members. The Board will appoint Committee and Task Force chairs and will approve their members.

1.7.1 Governance Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Governance Advisory Committee is to enable the Board of Trustees to live up to the performance expectations that it has set for itself. The committee's work may include:

- Developing and maintaining the Board policy manual.
- Reviewing and proposing revisions to policies as needed.
- Determining the need for a review of the Society Bylaws.
- Reviewing issues to determine if they are matters of management (within the purview of the Chief of Staff) or of policy (within the purview of the Board).
- Proposing a slate of nominees for election to the Board.
- Planning and implementing an orientation for new Board members.
- Assisting the Trustees with the annual Board self-evaluation process.
- Assisting the Trustees with the annual Chief of Staff evaluation process.

1.7.2 Oversight Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Oversight Advisory Committee is to assist the Board by monitoring that the Society's human and material resources are used for the benefit of its Mission. The committee's work may include:

- Evaluating the consistency of policies with the Mission and Vision of the church and ensuring the congregation acts to fulfill its mission.
- Assisting the Board in its oversight responsibilities for implementing the priorities in its Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan.
- Ensuring compliance with the annual goals of the church, and with the policies on guidance and limitations for the staff.
- Collecting data annually from the Society's various committees, teams and staff — data that will help the Committee and Board assess the health and progress of the congregation and its ministries.
- Setting up and monitoring methods of accountability for the Board and for the Ministry.

- Evaluating whether or not the Society is fulfilling its Mission.

1.7.3 Strategy Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Strategy Advisory Committee is to assist the Board of Trustees by recommending plans and priorities for supporting the Society's Mission and Vision. The committee's work may include:

- Researching changes, trends, opportunities and problems in the community at large that could impact the congregation, its Mission, and its ministries.
- Identifying and facilitating the discussion of open questions with the Board and congregation.
- Facilitating annual goal-setting for the Board of Trustees.
- Helping the Board to develop a long-range Strategic Plan and to evaluate and update this Plan on a regular basis.
- Leading discussions regarding potential changes in the congregation's Mission or Vision when necessary.

1.7.4 Finance Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Finance Advisory Committee is to assist the Board in its oversight of the congregation's finances. The committee's work may include:

- Ensuring that routine financial reports are clear and helpful.
- Working with staff to respond to requests for information from the Board.
- Working with staff and stakeholders to prepare a draft budget annually.
- Developing and reviewing church financial policies, as well as procedures to implement those policies.
- Coordinating the internal or external annual financial review.
- Ensuring that Board members have an adequate understanding of the congregation's financial status.

1.7.5 Infrastructure Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Infrastructure Advisory Committee is to enable the Board of Trustees to assure the integrity of UUSS physical infrastructure to support the mission and ministries of the Society. The committee's work may include:

- Reviewing major infrastructure projects.
- Recommending building usage policies.
- Ensuring inspections are performed to assess the condition of infrastructure.
- Developing and overseeing infrastructure preventive maintenance plans and schedules.
- Developing plans for needed and projected repairs or replacements of major equipment and building components.
- Maintaining awareness of zoning and property regulations applicable to UUSS infrastructure.

1.7.6 Human Resources Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Human Resources Advisory Committee is to assist the Board in developing and reviewing policies and related procedures pertaining to employment of the congregation's paid staff. The committee's work may include:

- Advising the Board of changes to applicable labor laws, rules and regulations.
- Gathering information on matters such as fair compensation, benefit options, and best practices.
- Reviewing requests for staff changes, including proposals for new positions.
- Recommending policies and procedures on topics including:
 - Hiring staff
 - Staff development and evaluations
 - Code of conduct and the handling of employee discipline
 - Time off policies, medical or personal leave time
 - Schedules and time keeping
 - Compensation and benefits
 - Computer, email, phone, social media usage and security
 - Grievance procedures
 - Termination and resignation

1.7.7 Investments Advisory Committee

The overall purpose of the Investments Advisory Committee is to manage and invest the assets of the congregation that are the result of bequests, as well as any other assets that the Board of Trustees asks the committee to invest on its behalf. The committee's work may include:

- Maintaining clear records of monies from bequests and gifts in separate endowed and non-endowed Trust Funds to the degree necessary to fulfill any restrictions that were placed on the bequests and gifts by their donors.
- Recommending Trust Fund investment and spending policies to the Board of Trustees.
- Reviewing the performance of investment advisors.
- Monitoring state and federal laws to ensure that the Board is fulfilling its fiduciary responsibilities as regards the handling of the Trusts Funds.
- Recommending the amount of the annual distribution from the various Trust Funds to the Board of Trustees, and developing procedures for making these distributions in accordance with any stipulations from the donors.
- Periodically submitting a report to the Board of Trustees of all assets under the committee's management.
- When a bequest is offered to the Society, working with the donor, executor or other representative to clarify the terms of said bequest and then submitting the bequest to the Board of Trustees for approval and formal acceptance.

Affirmed June 20, 2016

1.8 Conflicts of Interest

This policy reflects the Board's determination

- 1) to prevent the personal interest of elected or appointed Trustees from interfering with the performance of their duties to the Society, and
- 2) to prevent such members from receiving personal, financial, or professional gain at the expense of the Society.

Elected and appointed Trustees are therefore required to disclose any competing financial, professional, or personal obligations or interests that do or might interfere with their ability to perform their required duties in a fair and objective manner.

A conflict of interest is defined as a conflict between the private interests and official responsibilities of a member of the Board of Trustees. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Financial interest: receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing or competing with the church; having any kind of financial interest in any third party dealing with the church.
- Personal interest: relationship to another Board member, employee, or contractor of the church by blood, adoption, marriage, or domestic partnership.
- Professional Interest: holding office, serving on the board, participating in management or ownership, or being otherwise employed (or formerly employed) by any third party dealing with the church; using church time, personnel, equipment, or supplies for other than church approved activities, programs, and purposes; being in a position with another organization that leads to approaching the same donors on behalf of both organizations.

Affirmed December 21, 2015

1.9 Accountability and Removal of Board Members

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, professional and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members and officers. The Board has the right to hold members accountable, including when they fail in their duties or disrupt the body's work, with a maximum sanction of expulsion from the Board.

Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Concealing or ignoring conflicts of interest.
- Violating confidentiality regarding matters discussed in executive session.
- Exerting unapproved individual authority over the organization.
- Making unapproved public statements to outside entities.
- Being repeatedly absent from board meetings.
- Violating the Bylaws.
- Violating the Board Covenant in a serious and/or continued manner.

Before a vote to remove a Board member, the Board shall provide written advance notice to the member of its intent and offer the member the opportunity for a hearing before the Board. Removal of a Board member shall require a vote of at least two-thirds of the remaining Board members.

Affirmed July 18, 2016

2. DELEGATION TO THE STAFF

2.1 Global Delegation to the Head of Staff

The Board hereby delegates all of its authority to manage the work and resources of the church, except as expressly limited by these policies, to the Minister(s) as Head of Staff. The Board and the Minister(s) shall work collaboratively to carry out the Mission of the church.

2.1.1 Senior Staff Team

The Minister(s) manages the work of the church in collaboration with a Senior Staff Team. In addition to the Minister(s), the Senior Staff Team may include the Church Administrator, the Director of Lifespan Religious Education, the Director of Music, and the Congregational Life Coordinator, all of whom report directly to the Minister(s).

The Board expects the Senior Staff Team, individually and jointly:

- To lead and unify the paid and volunteer staff in directing their efforts toward the fulfillment of the UUSS Mission and Vision.
- To exercise judgment and consult appropriately in ensuring compliance with the Bylaws, Board policies, and applicable laws and regulations.
- To uphold a high standard of ethical and professional conduct.
- To accomplish goals adopted by the Board, by developing annual goals for its work as a team.

2.1.2 Staff Accountability

All staff members are ultimately accountable to the Minister(s), who is accountable to the Board, for their performance.

2.1.3 Creation of Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams are created as means to carry out the mission of the church and to achieve its desired outcomes. Ministry Teams are established under the authority of the Minister(s). Each team will respond to an identified strategic or tactical need, and teams may be formed at the suggestion of interested members or staff. Anyone interested in establishing a Ministry Team should consult the Minister(s) or the appropriate staff member.

Affirmed March 20, 2017

2.2 Limitation of Global Delegation Related to Personnel Decisions

The Board expects the Minister(s) to take the lead in the selection, hiring, supervision, and discharge of all paid staff.

2.2.1 Hiring Senior Staff

Before filling a Senior Staff position, the Minister(s) must create a Hiring Team representative of key stakeholders. After receiving the Hiring Team's recommendations, the Minister(s) selects and presents a candidate to the Board for the hiring decision.

2.2.2 Hiring Non-Senior Staff

Hiring decisions for Non-Senior Staff are made by the Minister(s), who must consult with key stakeholders, including the direct supervisor for the position, before making these decisions.

2.2.3 New Positions

New permanent staff positions are created through the budget process and approved by the Board. The Minister(s) may create and fill temporary positions, provided that they can be funded within established budgetary limits.

2.2.4 Employment at Will

All paid staff are employees at will, unless the Board approves the terms of a contract that states otherwise.

2.2.5 Termination

Prior to discharging a paid staff member, the Minister(s) must ensure that the decision complies with applicable laws, Board policies, contracts, and the personnel manual. The Minister(s) must promptly notify the Board when an employee is under consideration for termination. Before terminating a staff member, the Minister(s) must discuss the matter with the Board; however, the ultimate decision rests with the Minister(s).

Affirmed September 19, 2016

3. CARE FOR PAID STAFF

UUSS intends to be a fair, ethical, and attractive employer; to achieve high staff morale and productivity; and to protect members of the staff from all forms of injustice and abuse related to their employment.

3.1 Employee Handbook

The staff, in consultation with the Human Resources Advisory Committee, will maintain an up-to-date Employee Handbook that complies with all applicable legal requirements. The Employee Handbook must provide adequate policies and procedures to give practical effect to the principles identified in Board policies. It will be the responsibility of Staff and Board Advisory Committees to keep the Board informed of the content of and changes to the Handbooks.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.2 Equal Opportunity

UUSS is committed to equal employment opportunity for all individuals. Decisions about recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, compensation, benefits, and all similar employment decisions must be made in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual or affectional orientation, national origin, age, ability/disability, socio-economic status, education, spirituality, religious belief, genetic information, marital status, familial status, domestic violence victim status, ethnicity, or alienage. Any discrimination in the workplace based upon any protected classification is illegal and against policy, except that UUSS may require employees to respect Unitarian Universalist principles.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.3 Freedom from Workplace Harassment

Harassment of any kind is prohibited and will not be tolerated. UUSS prohibits conduct directed to its employees that shows hostility or an aversion toward an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual or affectional orientation, national origin, age, ability/disability, socio-economic status, education, spirituality, religious belief, genetic

information, marital status, familial status, domestic violence victim status, ethnicity, or alienage. UUSS also prohibits harassment based on any other classification protected by law, or any other harassment or bullying, whether or not protected by law.

Any action that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment; has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities is strictly forbidden. Retaliation against individuals who make a claim of discrimination, or participate in the investigation of such a claim, is prohibited by this policy and will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to sexual harassment by members of the same gender as well as opposite genders. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.

The aforementioned actions and behaviors are also considered sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a factor in employment decisions affecting the individual. The aforementioned actions and behaviors are also considered sexual harassment when the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's employment or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment environment.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.4 Whistleblower Protection

UUSS shall protect employees who make any lawful disclosure of information on a matter of UUSS concern, when they have reason to believe they are reporting a violation of any law, mismanagement, gross waste or misappropriation of UUSS funds or assets, a substantial and specific danger to public health and safety, or other alleged wrongful conduct. Further, UUSS prohibits adverse actions being taken against employees, volunteers, or any UUSS member in knowing retaliation for such disclosure. Any person found to have so violated this Policy shall be disciplined, up to and including termination from employment or expulsion from membership.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.5 Grievance

It is the policy of UUSS that an employee shall have access to a grievance process as specified in the Employee Handbook, for all grievances including those based on discrimination, harassment, or any other basis. If the grievance is not resolved through the specified process, the employee may seek a review by the Board of Trustees. The resolution determined by the Board of Trustees will be binding upon the employee, the Head of Staff, and the congregation.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.6 Conflict of Interest Policy (for Paid Staff)

This policy reflects the Board's determination

- 1) to prevent the personal interest of paid staff members from interfering with the performance of their duties to the Society, and
- 2) to prevent such staff members from receiving personal, financial, or professional gain at the expense of the Society, beyond the terms of their employment.

Paid staff members are therefore required to disclose any competing financial, professional, or personal obligations or interests that do or might interfere with their ability to perform their required duties in a fair and objective manner.

A conflict of interest is defined as a conflict between the private interests and official responsibilities of a paid staff member. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Financial interest: receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing or competing with the church; having any kind of financial interest in any third party dealing with the church.
- Personal interest: relationship to a Board member, another employee, or contractor of the church by blood, adoption, marriage, or domestic partnership; serving in a supervisory capacity to another staff member so related.
- Professional Interest: holding office, serving on the board, participating in management or ownership, or being otherwise employed (or formerly employed) by any third party dealing with the church; using church time, personnel, equipment, or supplies for other than church approved activities, programs, and purposes; being in a position with another organization that leads to approaching the same donors on behalf of both organizations.

Affirmed December 21, 2015

3.7 Staff Performance Appraisal

As Head of Staff, the minister(s) organizes and leads annually a systematic process of developmental performance appraisal for all UUSS staff. Each staff member participates in the process with their supervisor, and all final reports are signed off by the Head of Staff.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

3.8 Fair Compensation

UUSS strives to maintain fiscal and ethical integrity with respect to compensation of employees. Thus, UUSS shall fulfill employment agreements in terms of hours of work, wages, and benefits. Employment agreements will be offered within the confines of the projected annual budget. Our goal is to follow the UUA guidelines for fair compensation.

Affirmed November 21, 2016

4. CARE FOR MEMBERS AND GUESTS

It is the policy of the UUSS to provide members and guests with a safe and welcoming environment. The staff is responsible for ensuring compliance with all sections of this policy and for developing procedures to implement as necessary.

4.1 Handbooks

The staff, in consultation with relevant Advisory Committees and Teams, will maintain up-to-date Handbooks (e.g., Religious Education, Safety, Operations) that articulate policies and procedures to give practical effect to the principles identified in Board policies. It will be the responsibility of Staff and Board Advisory Committees to keep the Board informed of the content of and changes to the Handbooks.

4.2 Alcohol

UUSS is committed to the use and consumption of alcohol only in a safe and responsible manner. All federal, state and local laws governing the serving and/or sale of alcohol shall be observed. No person under twenty-one shall consume alcohol at any UUSS-sponsored event, even with parental consent. This policy applies to all UUSS-sponsored events, whether held on-site or off-site, as well as to non-UUSS-sponsored events held on UUSS property. The staff shall create and implement procedures to carry out this policy.

4.3 Building Safety and Security

The staff shall ensure that all UUSS programs are safe for participants and staff; that facilities are maintained in a safe, sanitary, and secure condition; that hazards are corrected promptly; that required licenses and inspections are kept up-to-date; and that access to UUSS buildings is limited to those who have legitimate business there.

4.4 Child Protection.

UUSS is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth. The staff shall create and maintain procedures for the selection, training and supervision of all persons who work with children and youth, as well as other procedures as necessary to ensure the safety of persons 18 years of age or younger.

4.5 Emergency Planning

The staff shall create and maintain a written plan for responding to reasonably foreseeable emergencies, including medical emergencies, fire, toxic conditions, weather problems, threatening communications, power outages, natural disasters, and other circumstances that create or threaten to create dangerous conditions.

4.6 Firearms

No one may carry a firearm on UUSS property except for on-duty law enforcement officers or security personnel hired by the UUSS.

4.7 Right Relations

The strength, well-being and reputation of UUSS depend upon a sense of fellowship among the members, guests, and staff, which thrives in an atmosphere of trust, respect and cooperation. The staff shall create and maintain procedures to deal with any instances of harassment, including sexual harassment; disruptive behavior; and other actions which are a violation of right relations.

4.8 Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on all UUSS property and at all off-site UUSS-sponsored events.

4.9 Universal Access

The UUSS is committed to making its premises and activities safely and conveniently accessible to persons with disabilities, meeting or exceeding all applicable legal requirements.

4.10 Welcoming Congregation

The UUSS is a Welcoming Congregation. We welcome everyone of any race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual or affectional orientation or expression, national origin, age, ability/disability, socio-economic status, education, and spiritual or religious belief.

Affirmed March 20, 2017

5. CARE FOR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The activities of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady (UUSS) involve the handling of substantial funds for which the Society is financially and legally responsible. The size and complexity of Society operations require that sound accounting and business practices be used in their performance. The following policies provide guidance to Teams, Committees and the Board of Trustees of the Society to discharge adequately and efficiently their obligations and responsibilities to the Congregation.

5.1 Handbooks

The staff, in consultation with relevant Advisory Committees and Teams, will maintain up-to-date Handbooks (e.g., Finance, Investments, Operations) that articulate policies and procedures to give practical effect to the principles identified in Board policies. It will be the responsibility of Staff and Board Advisory Committees to keep the Board informed of the content of and changes to the Handbooks.

5.2 Federal, State and Local Regulatory Compliance

While conducting church business, members, friends, staff persons, and other persons affiliated with the church shall comply with Federal, State and local regulations.

5.3 Tax-Exempt Status

No member, friend, staff person, or other person affiliated with the church shall take any action that could jeopardize the congregation's tax-exempt status under local, state, or federal law.

5.4 Insurance

The UUSS shall carry Property, Liability, and Directors and Officers Liability insurance at levels required by law or recommended by industry standards.

5.5 Document Retention

The UUSS will retain all documents required by local, state, and federal government agencies for the legally required amount of time. These documents may include, but are not limited to, tax records, personnel files, and financial records. Documents recording the history of the UUSS shall be appropriately stored at the church in a manner that maintains the integrity of the document. Storage location, format, and duration for such materials will be determined in consultation with the UUSS Archivist(s).

5.6 Purchasing and Contracting

The UUSS will practice sustainable stewardship of infrastructure and financial resources in purchasing and contracting, with attention to legal and insurance requirements and best

practices, with clearly specified procedures for long-range planning and timely response to urgent events.

5.7 Financial Controls

The Finance Advisory Committee will establish controls to ensure the integrity of finances in the UUSS. This includes designation of authority and responsibility for the preparation and signing of checks with appropriate separation of duties and oversight, and organizing an ongoing internal review of financial transactions. External audit or review will be conducted in accordance with State law.

5.8 Cash Flow

The Board of Trustees will have a contingency plan to respond to significant expected, unexpected or unpredictable financial contingencies the church may encounter, as well as predictable variations in cash flow. The Building Fund and Trusts funds serve as other reserve funds under the management of the Investment Advisory Committee.

5.9 Fundraising

The UUSS shall engage in activities to generate the income needed to fund the UUSS budget, including the Annual Pledge Drive and special events, sales, auctions, gatherings, and other activities that shall be planned in a given year. Fundraising activities shall be coordinated with attention to minimizing competition and distraction, especially for the Annual Pledge Drive as the core funding source for the UUSS. In accordance with the policy on Global Delegation, the Minister(s) as Head of Staff has final approval of the fundraising cycle.

5.10 Gift Acceptance

The UUSS encourages donors to minimize restrictions or conditions on gifts. The UUSS reserves the right to decline any gift that is inconsistent with the mission of the UUSS or its tax-exempt status, that creates an undue administrative burden, or that causes the UUSS to incur excessive expenses. The Board shall have the ultimate authority to make decisions regarding gifts.

5.11 Confidentiality

The UUSS, its staff, and its volunteers shall hold all information obtained from or about donors or prospective donors in confidence. A donor's or prospective donor's name shall not be disclosed publicly without their written approval. If the donor is a corporation, its name will be treated confidentially unless an authorized corporate representative has provided written approval for disclosure.

5.12 Management and Use of Invested Funds

The UUSS shall prudently manage and invest funds to balance long term sustainability and short term benefit to the congregation.

Affirmed February 21, 2017

6. CARE FOR PHYSICAL RESOURCES

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady (UUSS) will prudently manage and maintain its buildings and grounds, and all furnishings and equipment, to balance respect for heritage with maximizing benefit to the current and future congregation

- 6.1 Handbooks
- 6.2 Building Maintenance
- 6.3 Gardens and Grounds
- 6.4 Facilities Use

7. COMMUNICATION

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady (UUSS) will manage communications and affiliations so as to promote and foster Unitarian Universalist values in the context of positive and productive relationships within the congregation and with other individuals and organizations, and the general public.

- 7.1 Handbooks
- 7.2 General Communications, Publicity & Media Relations
- 7.3 Urgent Communications & Cancellations
- 7.4 Electronic Files and Communications
- 7.5 Use of the Website and Social Media
- 7.6 Public Representation of the Congregation on Issues
- 7.7 Affiliation with External Organizations
- 7.8 Respect for Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws

First review 3-20-17

8. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

General processes for authorization, connection and oversight of organizations operating under the legal authority of the UUSS, which would then be fully articulated in the Financial and Operations Handbook

9. OVERSIGHT

9.1 Cycle of Planning, Evaluation and Review

The UUSS Board of Trustees acknowledges its continuing responsibility for establishing ministry goals and evaluating programs' structural functioning. The congregation's Mission and Vision Statements will be implemented through a regular and ongoing planning process that is transparent and participatory.

The Board is committed to fulfilling this responsibility by establishing an annual cycle for review of: 1) its own vision and goal-setting practices; 2) the functioning of the Board's Advisory Committees; and 3) the functioning of the Congregation's Ministry Teams.

A model for scheduling the Board's annual responsibilities throughout the Church year is attached hereto as Exhibit A. The Board anticipates that Board Advisory Committees and specific Ministry Teams may change over time.

9.2 Monitoring

9.2.1 Financial Reports

The preparation of monthly financial reports is overseen by the Treasurer, working with the Church Administrator and Bookkeeper, reviewed by the Finance Advisory Committee and presented to the Board of Trustees in its regular monthly meeting. The reports include an updated status of the Operating Budget and all Funds for restricted use (as documented on the Balance Sheet), and any other significant financial activity or any special funds that may be authorized by the Board, including the status of invested funds.

9.2.2 Staff Reports

The Minister(s) prepares a monthly report and associated documents, to be included in the Board of Trustees' Consent Agenda at the regular monthly meeting.

9.2.3 Board Inquiries

The Board may request, through the Minister(s) as Head of Staff, data, information, or advice from staff and ministry teams to support its regular function. Such requests must come from the Board as a whole and not from individual trustees.

9.2.4 Oversight of Ministry Teams

The Board annually reviews all Ministry Teams to ensure that each Ministry Team has a statement of purpose, ministry vision with goals and outcomes, relational covenant, job descriptions for team leaders and members, and is carrying out appropriate functions. The Minister(s) as Head of Staff, working with the Oversight Advisory Committee, will coordinate the preparation and presentation of annual reports by Ministry Teams.

9.3 Evaluation

9.3.1 Board and Board Advisory Committee Self-Evaluation

The Board, with the support of the Oversight Committee, evaluates the structure and function of the Board of Trustees and its Advisory Committees on an annual schedule.

9.3.2 Minister(s) as Head of Staff Evaluation

The Board of Trustees annually evaluates the performance of the Minister(s) as Head of Staff, in terms of the Mission and Vision, Strategic Plan, and the goals and outcomes that are established by the Board.

Affirmed March 20, 2017